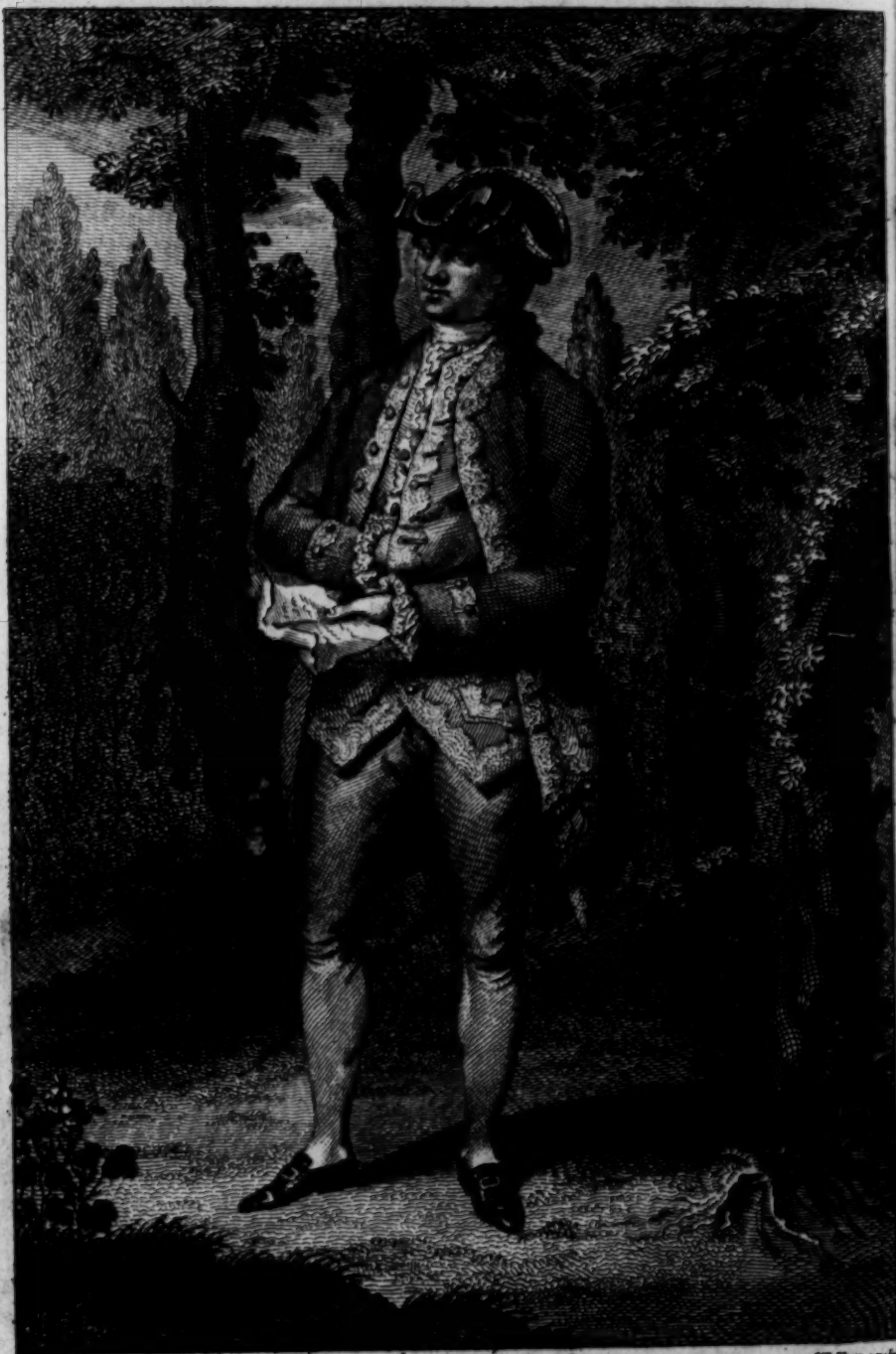


Act I.

FAIR PENITENT.

Scene I.



Dod del.

Published July 23rd 1776, by Elardus & Partners.

Walter sculp.

MR. LAIKIN, in the Character of HORATIO.

Hold, let me take a moment's Thought.

4

THE
FAIR PENITENT.
A
TRAGEDY.

WRITTEN BY
NICHOLAS ROWE, Esq;

Marked with the Variations in the
MANAGER'S BOOK,

AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

QUIS MORERE, UT MERITA ES; FERROQUE AVERTE
DOLOREM. VIRG. ÆN. LIB. 4.



L O N D O N:

Printed for T. LOWNDES; T. CASLON; W. NICOLL;
and S. BLADON.

M.DCC.LXXVI.

✂ The Reader is desired to observe, that the Passages omitted in the Representation at the Theatres are here preserved, and marked with inverted Commas; as in Line 33 to 35 in Page 10.



TO HER GRACE THE
D U C H E S S
O F
O R M O N D.

M A D A M,

THE privilege of poetry (or it may be the vanity of the pretenders to it) has given them a kind of right to pretend at the same time, to the favour of those, whom their high birth and excellent qualities have placed in a very distinguishing manner above the rest of the world. If this be not a received maxim, yet I am sure I am to wish it were, that I may have at least some kind of excuse for laying this Tragedy at your GRACE's feet. I have too much reason to fear that

it may prove but an indifferent entertainment to your GRACE, since, if I have any way succeeded in it, it has been in describing those violent passions which have been always strangers to so happy a temper, and so noble and so exalted a virtue as your GRACE is mistress of. Yet for all this, I cannot but confess the vanity which I have, to hope that there may be something so moving in the misfortunes and distress of the play, as may be not altogether unworthy of your GRACE's pity. This is one of the main designs of tragedy; and to excite this generous pity in the greatest minds, may pass for some kind of success in this way of writing. I am sensible of the presumption I am guilty of by this hope, and how much it is that I pretend to in your GRACE's approbation; if it be my good fortune to meet with any little share of it, I shall always look upon it as much more to me than the general applause of the theatre, or even the praise of a good critic. Your GRACE's name is the best protection this play can hope for; since the world, ill-natured as it is, agrees in an universal respect and deference for your GRACE's person and character. In so censorious an age as this is, where every-body pulls and is pulled to pieces of course, and where there is hardly such a thing as being merry, but at another's expence; yet by a public and uncommon justice to the Ducheſs of *Ormond*, her name has never been mentioned, but as it ought, though she has beauty enough to provoke detraction from the fairest of her own sex, and virtue enough to make the loose and dissolute of the other
(a very

D E D I C A T I O N.

v

(a very formidable party) her enemies. Instead of this, they agree to say nothing of her but what she deserves. That her spirit is worthy of her birth; her sweetness, of the love and respect of all the world; her piety, of her religion; her service, of her royal mistress; and her beauty and truth, of her lord; that, in short, every part of her character is just, and that she is the best reward for one of the greatest heroes this age has produced. This, Madam, is what you must allow people every where to say; those whom you shall leave behind you in *England* will have something further to add, the loss we shall suffer by your GRACE's journey to *Ireland*; the Queen's pleasure, and the impatient wishes of that nation, are about to deprive us of two of our public ornaments. But there is no arguing against reasons so prevalent as these. Those who shall lament your GRACE's absence will yet acquiesce in the wisdom and justice of her MAJESTY's choice: among all whose royal favours none could be so agreeable, upon a thousand accounts, to that people, as the Duke of *Ormond*. With what joy, what acclamations shall they meet a governor, who, beside their former obligations to his family, has so lately ventur'd his life and fortune for their preservation! What duty, what submission shall they not pay to that authority which the Queen has delegated to a person so dear to them? And with what honour, what respect shall they receive your GRACE, when they look upon you as the noblest and best pattern her MAJESTY could send them, of her own royal goodness, and personal virtues? They shall

behold your GRACE with the same pleasure the *English* shall whenever it shall be their good fortune to see you return again to your native country. In *England* your GRACE is become a publick concern; and as your going away will be attended with a general sorrow, so your return shall give a general a joy; and to none of those many, more than to,

M A D A M,

Your GRACE's

most obedient and

most humble servant,

N I C. R O W E.

P R O L O G U E.

LONG has the fate of kings and empires been
 The common bus'ness of the tragic scene,
 As if misfortune made the throne her seat,
 And none could be unhappy but the great.
 Dearly, 'tis true, each buys the crown he wears,
 And many are the mighty monarch's cares :
 By foreign foes and home-bred factions prest,
 Few are the joys he knows, and short his hours of rest.
 Stories like these with wonder we may hear ;
 But far remote, and in a higher sphere,
 We ne'er can pity what we ne'er can share ;
 Like distant battles of the Pole and Swede,
 Which frugal citizens o'er coffee read,
 Careless for who should fail and who succeed.
 Therefore an humble theme our author chose,
 A melancholy tale of private woes :
 No princes here lost royalty bemoan,
 But you shall meet with sorrows like your own :
 Here see imperious love his vassals treat
 As hardly as ambition does the great ;
 See how succeeding passions rage by turns,
 How fierce the youth with joy and rapture burns,
 And how to death, for beauty lost, he mourns.

Let no nice taste the poet's art arraign,
 If some frail vicious characters he feign :
 Who writes should still let nature be his care,
 Mix shades with lights, nad not paint all things fair,
 But shew you men and women as they are.
 With deference to the fair he bade me say,
 Few to perfection ever found the way :
 Many in many parts are known t' excel,
 But 'twere too hard for one to act all well ;
 Whom justly life would through each scene commend,
 The maid, the wife, the mistress, and the friend :
 This age, 'tis true, has one great instance seen,
 And heav'n in justice made that One a queen.

Dramatis Personæ, 1776.

M E N.

Sciolto, a nobleman of Genoa, father to Calista.	—
Altamont, a young lord, in love with Calista, and de-	sign'd her husband by Sciolto — — }
Horatio, his friend	— — —
Lothario, a young lord, and enemy to Altamont	— — —
Rossano, his friend	— — —
	W O M E N.
Calista, daughter to Sciolto	— — —
Lavinia, sister to Altamont, and wife to Horatio	— — —
Lucilla, confidant to Calista.	— — —

At Drury Lane.	Covent Garden.
Mr. AIKIN.	Mr. BARRY.
Mr. BRERETON.	Mr. WROUGHTON.
Mr. BENSLEY.	Mr. AIKIN.
Mr. REDDISH.	Mr. LEWIS.
Mr. WHITFIELD.	Mr. YOUNG.
	Mrs. BARRY.
Mrs. YATES.	Mrs. BULKLEY.
Miss SHERRY.	Miss DAVES.
Mrs. DAVIES.	

Servants to Sciolto.

S C E N E, Sciolto's Palace and Garden, with some part of the street near it in Genoa.

T H E
F A I R P E N I T E N T.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

A garden belonging to Sciolto's Palace.

Enter Altamont and Horatio.

Altamont. **L**ET this auspicious day be ever sacred,
No mourning, no misfortunes happen
on it:

Let it be mark'd for triumphs and rejoicings;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes, and crown their wishes,
This happy day that gives me my *Calista*.

Hor. Yes, *Altamont*; to-day thy better stars
Are join'd to shed their kindest Influence on thee;
Sciolto's noble hand that rais'd thee first,
Half dead and drooping o'er thy father's grave,
Compleats its bounty, and restores thy name
To that high rank and lustre which it boasted,
Before ungrateful *Genoa* had forgot
The merit of thy god-like father's arms;
Before that country, which he long had serv'd
In watchful counsels and in winter camps,
Had cast off his white age to want and wretchedness,
And made their court to factions by his ruin.

Alt. Oh, great *Sciolto*! Oh, my more than father!
Let me not live, but at thy very name
My eager heart springs up, and leaps with joy.
When I forget the vast, vast debt I owe thee,

10 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Forget! (but 'tis impossible) then let me
 Forget the use and privilege of reason,
 Be driven from the commerce of mankind,
 To wander in the desert among brutes,
 To bear the various fury of the seasons,
 The night's unwholesome dew and noon-day's heat,
 To be the scorn of earth, and curse of heav'n!

Hor. So open, so unbounded was his goodness,
 It reach'd ev'n me, because I was thy friend.
 When that great man I lov'd, thy noble father
 Bequeath'd thy gentle sister to my arms,
 His last dear pledge and legacy of friendship;
 That happy tie made me *Sciolto's* son;
 He call'd us his, and with a parent's fondness
 Indulg'd us in his wealth, blest'd us with plenty,
 Heal'd all our cares, and sweeten'd love itself.

Alt. By heav'n, he found my fortunes so abandon'd,
 That nothing but a miracle could raise 'em:
 My father's bounty, and the state's ingratitude,
 Had stripp'd him bare, nor left him e'en a grave;
 Undone myself, and sinking with his ruin,
 I had no wealth to bring, nothing to succour him,
 But fruitless tears.

Hor. Yet what thou couldst thou didst,
 And didst it like a son; when his hard creditors,
 Urg'd and assisted by *Lothario's* father,
 (Foe to thy house, and rival of their greatness)
 By sentence of the cruel law forbid
 His venerable corpse to rest in earth,
 Thou gav'st thyself a ransom for his bones;
 With piety uncommon, didst give up
 Thy hopeful youth to slaves who ne'er knew mercy,
 'Sour, unrelenting, money-loving villains,
 'Who laugh at human nature and forgiveness,
 'And are like fiends the factors of destruction.'
 Heav'n, who beheld the pious act, approv'd it,
 And bade *Sciolto's* bounty be its proxy,
 To bless thy filial virtue with abundance.

Alt. But see he comes, the author of my happiness,
 The man who sav'd my life from deadly sorrow,

Who

THE FAIR PENITENT. 11

Who bids my days be blest with peace and plenty,
And satisfies my soul with love and beauty.

Enter Sciolto; he runs to Altamont and embraces him.

Sci. Joy to thee, *Altamont*! Joy to myself!
Joy to this happy morn, that makes thee mine,
That kindly grants what nature had deny'd me,
And makes me father of a son like thee.

Alt. My father! Oh let me unlade my breast,
Pour out the fulness of my soul before you;
Shew ev'ry tender, ev'ry grateful thought,
This wondrous goodness stirs. 'But 'tis impossible,
'And utterance all is vile; since I can only
'Swear you reign here, but never tell how much.'

Sci. It is enough; I know thee, thou art honest;
Goodness innate, and worth hereditary
Are in thy mind; thy noble father's virtues
Spring freshly forth, and blossom in thy youth.

Alt. Thus heav'n from nothing rais'd his fair creation,
And then with wondrous joy beheld its beauty,
Well pleas'd to see the excellence he gave.

Sci. O noble youth! I swear since first I knew thee,
Ev'n from that day of sorrow when I saw thee,
Adorn'd and lovely in thy filial tears,
The mourner and redeemer of thy father,
I set thee down and seal'd thee for my own:
Thou art my son, ev'n near me as *Calista*.

Horatio and Lavinia too are mine; [Embraces Hor.

All are my children, and shall share my heart.
But wherefore waste we thus this happy day?
The laughing minutes summon thee to joy,
And with new pleasures court thee as they pass;
Thy waiting bride ev'n chides thee for delaying,
And swears thou com'st not with a bridegroom's haste.

Alt. Oh! cou'd I hope there was one thought of
Altamont,

One kind remembrance in *Calista's* breast,
The winds, with all their wings, would be too slow
To bear me to her feet. For oh! my father,
Amidst the stream of joy that bears me on,
Blest as I am, and honour'd in your friendship,

There

12 THE FAIR PENITENT.

There is one pain that hangs upon my heart.

Sci. What means my son?

Alt. When at your intercession,
Last night *Calista* yielded to my happiness,
Just ere we parted, as I seal'd my vows
With rapture on her lips, I found her cold,
As a dead lover's statue on his tomb;
A rising storm of passion shook her breast,
Her eyes a piteous show'r of tears let fall,
And then she sigh'd as if her heart was breaking.
With all the tend'rest eloquence of love
I beg'd to be a sharer in her grief:
But she, with looks averse, and eyes that froze me,
Sadly reply'd, her sorrows were her own,
Nor in a father's power to dispose of.

Sci. Away! it is the cozenage of their sex,
One of the common arts they practise on us:
To sigh and weep then when their hearts beat high
With expectation of the coming joy.
Thou hast in camps and fighting fields been bred,
Unknowing in the subtleties of women;
The virgin bride, who swoons with deadly fear,
To see the end of all her wishes near,
When blushing from the light and public eyes,
To the kind covert of the night she flies,
With equal fires to meet the bridegroom moves,
Melts in his arms, and with a loose she loves. [Exe.

Enter Lothario and Rossano.

Loth. The father and the husband!

Ross. Let them pass.

They saw us not.

Loth. I care not if they did,
Ere long I mean to meet 'em face to face,
And gall 'em with my triumph o'er *Calista*.

Ross. You lov'd her once.

Loth. I lik'd her, wou'd have marry'd her,
But that it pleas'd her father to refuse me,
To make this honourable fool her husband:
For which, if I forget him, may the shame
I mean to brand his name with stick on mine.

Ross.

THE FAIR PENITENT. 13

Ross. She, gentle soul, was kinder than her father.

Loth. She was, and oft in private gave me hearing,
Till by long list'ning to the soothing tale,
At length her easy heart was wholly mine.

Ross. I have heard you oft describe her, haughty,
insolent,
And fierce with high disdain; it moves my wonder,
That virtue thus defended, should be yielded
A prey to loose desires.

Loth. Hear then, I'll tell thee.
Once in a lone and secret hour of night,
When ev'ry eye was clos'd, and the pale moon
And stars alone shone conscious of the theft,
Hot with the *Tuscan* grape, and high in blood,
Hap'ly I stole unheeded to her chamber.

Ross. That minute sure was lucky.

Loth. Oh! 'twas great!
I found the fond, believing, love sick maid,
Loose, unattir'd, warm, tender, full of wishes;
Fierceness and pride, the guardians of her honour,
Were charm'd to rest, and love alone was waking.
Within her rising bosom all was calm,
As peaceful seas that know no storms, and only
Are gently lifted up and down by tides.
I snatch'd the glorious, golden opportunity,
And with prevailing, youthful ardor prest her,
'Till with short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness.
Ev'n all the live-long night we pass'd in bliss,
In ecstasies too fierce to last for ever;
At length the morn, and cold indifference came;
When fully sated with the luscious banquet,
I hastily took leave, and left the nymph
To think on what was past, and sigh alone.

Ross. You saw her soon again?

Loth. Too soon I saw her:
For oh! that meeting was not like the former;
I found my heart no more beat high with transport,
No more I sigh'd, and languish'd for enjoyment;
'Twas past, and reason took her turn to reign,

While

14 THE FAIR PENITENT.

While ev'ry weakness fell before her throne.

Ross. What of the lady?

Loth. With uneasy fondness

She hung upon me, wept, and sigh'd, and swore
She was undone; talk'd of a priest, and marriage;
Of flying with me from her father's pow'r;
Call'd ev'ry saint and blessed angel down,
To witness for her that she was my wife.
I started at that name.

Ross. What answer made you?

Loth. None; but pretending sudden pain and illness
Escap'd the persecution: two nights since,
By message urg'd and frequent importunity,
Again I saw her. Straight with tears and sighs,
With swelling breasts, with swooning, with distraction,
With all the subtleties and powerful arts
Of wilful woman lab'ring for her purpose,
Again she told the same dull nauseous tale.
Unmov'd, I beg'd her spare th' ungrateful subject,
Since I resolv'd, that love and peace of mind
Might flourish long inviolate betwixt us,
Never to load it with the marriage chain:
That I would still retain her in my heart,
My ever gentle mistress and my friend;
But for those other names of wife and husband,
They only meant ill-nature, cares, and quarrels.

Ross. How bore she this reply?

Loth. Ev'n as the earth,

When (winds pent up, or heating fires beneath
Shaking the mass) she labours with destruction.
At first her rage was dumb, and wanted words;
But when the storm found way, 'twas wild and loud,
Mad as the priestesses of the *Delphick* God.
Enthusiastick passion swell'd her breast,
Enlarg'd her voice, and ruffled all her form;
Proud, and disdainful of the love I proffer'd,
She call'd me villain! monster! base betrayer!
At last, in very bitterness of soul,
With deadly imprecations on herself,
She vow'd severely ne'er to see me more;

Then

Then bid me fly that minute: I obey'd,
And bowing left her to grow cool at leisure,

Ross. She has relented since, else why this message,
To meet the keeper of her secrets here
This morning?

Loth. See the person whom you nam'd!

Enter Lucilla.

Well, my ambassadresses, what must we treat of?
Come you to menace war and proud defiance,
Or does the peaceful olive grace your message?
Is your fair mistress calmer? does she soften?
And must we love again? perhaps she means
To treat in juncture with her new ally,
And make her husband party to th' agreement.

Luc. Is this well done, my lord? have you put off
All sense of human nature? keep a little,
A little pity to distinguish manhood,
Lest other men, tho' cruel, should disclaim you,
And judge you to be number'd with the brutes.

Loth. I see thou'lt learnt to rail.

Luc. I've learnt to weep:

That lesson my sad mistress often gives me:
By day she seeks some melancholy shade,
To hide her sorrows from the prying world;
At night she watches all the long, long hours,
And listens to the winds and beating rain,
With sighs as loud, and tears that fall as fast.
Then ever and anon she wrings her hands,
And cries, false, false *Lothario*!

Loth. Oh, no more!

I swear thou'lt spoil thy pretty face with crying,
And thou hast beauty that may make thy fortune:
Some keeping cardinal shall doat upon thee,
And barter his church treasure for thy freshness.

Luc. What! shall I sell my innocence and youth,
For wealth or titles, to perfidious man!
To man! who makes his mirth of our undoing!
The base, profest betrayer of our sex!
Let me grow old in all misfortunes else,
Rather than know the sorrows of *Calista*!

Loth.

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Loth. Does she send thee to chide in her behalf?
I swear thou dost it with so good a grace,
That I could almost love thee for thy frowning.

Luc. Read there, my Lord, there, in her own sad
lines, [Giving a letter.
Which best can tell the story of her woes,
That grief of heart which your unkindness gives her.
[Lothario reads]

*Your cruelty—obedience to my father—gave my hand
to Altamont.*

By heav'n! 'tis well! such ever be the gifts
With which I greet the man whom my soul hates. [Aside.
But go on!

—— *Wish* —— *Heart* —— *Honour* —— *too faithless*
—— *Weakness* —— *to-morrow* —— *last Trouble* ——
lost Calista.

Women I see can change as well as men;
She writes me here, forsaken as I am,
That I should bind my brows with mournful willow,
For she has giv'n her hand to *Altamont*:
Yet tell the fair inconstant——

Luc. How, my lord!

Loth. Nay, no more angry words: say to *Calista*,
The humblest of her slaves shall wait her pleasure;
If she can leave her happy husband's arms,
To think upon so lost a thing as I am.

Luc. Alas! for pity come with gentler looks:
Wound not her heart with this unmanly triumph:
And tho' you love her not, yet swear you do,
So shall dissembling once be virtuous in you.

Loth. Ha! who comes here?

Luc. The bridegroom's friend, *Horatio*.
He must not see us here: to-morrow early
Be at the garden gate.

Loth. Bear to my Love
My kindest thoughts, and swear I will not fail her.

[Lothario putting up the letter hastily, drops
it as he goes out.

[Exeunt Lothario and Rossano one way,
Lucilla another.

Enter

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Sure 'tis the very error of my eyes;
Waking I dream, or I beheld *Lothario*;
He seem'd conferring with *Calista's* woman:
At my approach they started, and retir'd.
What business could he have here, and with her;
I know he bears the noble *Altamont*
Profest and deadly hate—What paper's this?

[Taking up the letter.

Ha! To *Lothario*!—'sdeath! *Calista's* name.

[Opening it.

Confusion and Misfortunes!

[Reads.

YOUR cruelty has at length determined me, and I have resolv'd this morning to yield a perfect obedience to my father, and to give my hand to *Altamont*, in spite of my weakness for the false *Lothario*. I could almost wish I had that heart and that honour to bestow with it, which you have robb'd me of:

Damnation! to the rest——

[Reads again.

But oh! I fear could I retrieve 'em, I should again be undone by the too faithless, yet too lovely Lothario. This is the last weakness of my pen, and to-morrow shall be the last in which I will indulge my eyes. Lucilla shall conduct you, if you are kind enough to let me see you; it shall be the last trouble you shall meet with from

The lost Calista.

The lost indeed! for thou art gone as far
As there can be perdition. Fire and sulphur!
Hell is the sole avenger of such crimes.
Oh, that the ruin were but all thy own!
Thou wilt ev'n make thy father curse his age:
At sight of this black scroll, the gentle *Altamont*
(For oh! I know his heart is set upon thee)
Shall droop, and hang his discontented head,
Like merit scorn'd by insolent authority,

And

18 THE FAIR PENITENT.

And never grace the public with his virtues.—

‘ Perhaps ev’n now he gazes fondly on her,
 ‘ And thinking soul and body both alike,
 ‘ Blesses the perfect workmanship of heav’n;
 ‘ Then sighing, to his ev’ry care speaks peace,
 ‘ And bids his heart be satisfy’d with happiness.
 ‘ Oh, wretched husband! while she hangs about thee
 ‘ With idle blandishments, and plays the fond one,
 ‘ Ev’n then her hot imagination wanders,
 ‘ Contriving riot, and loose ’scapes of love;
 ‘ And while she clasps thee close, makes thee a monster.’

What if I give this paper to her father?

It follows that his justice dooms her dead,

And breaks his heart with sorrow; hard return

For all the good his hand has heap’d on us!

Hold, let me take a moment’s thought—

Enter Lavinia.

Lav. My lord!

Trust me, it joys my heart that I have found you.

Enquiring wherefore you had left the company,

Before my brother’s nuptial rites were ended,

They told me you had felt some sudden illness;

Where are you sick? is it your head? your heart?

Tell me, my love, and ease my anxious thoughts?

That I may take you gently in my arms,

Sooth you to rest, and soften all your pain.

Hor. It were unjust: No, let me spare my friend,

Lock up the fatal secret in my breast,

Nor tell him that which will undo his quiet.

Lav. What means my lord?

Hor. Ha! saidst thou, my *Lavinia*?

Lav. Alas! you know not what you make me suffer.

Why are you pale? why did you start and tremble?

Whence is that sigh? and wherefore are your eyes

Severely rais’d to heav’n? the sick man thus,

Acknowledging the summons of his fate,

Lifts up his feeble hands and eyes for mercy,

And with confusion thinks upon his exit.

Hor. Oh no! thou hast mistook my sickness quite;

These pangs are of the soul. Wou’d I had met

Sharpest

Sharpest convulsions, spotted pestilence,
Or any other deadly foe to life,
Rather than heave beneath this load of thought !

Lav. Alas ! what is it ? ' wherefore turn you
' from me ?'

Why did you falsely call me your *Lavinia*,
And swear I was *Horatio's* better half,
Since now you mourn unkindly by yourself,
And rob me of my partnership of sadness ?
' Witness, ye holy pow'rs, who know my truth,
' There cannot be a chance in life so miserable,
' Nothing so very hard but I could bear it,
' Much rather than my love should treat me coldly,
' And use me like a stranger to his heart.'

Hor. Seek not to know what I would hide from all,
But most from thee. I never knew a pleasure,
Ought that was joyful, fortunate, or good,
But straight I ran to bless thee with the tidings,
And laid up all my happiness with thee :
But wherefore, wherefore should I give thee pain ?
' Then spare me, I conjure thee ; ask no further ;
Allow my melancholy thoughts this privilege,
And let 'em brood in secret o'er their sorrows.

Lav. It is enough ; chide not, and all is well !
Forgive me if I saw you sad, *Horatio*,
And ask'd to weep out part of your misfortunes :
I wo't not press to know what you forbid me.
Yet, my lov'd lord, yet you must grant me this,
Forget your cares for this one happy day,
Devote this day to mirth, and to your *Altamont* ;
For his dear sake let peace be in your looks.
Ev'n now the jocund bridegroom waits your wishes,
He thinks the priest has but half blest his marriage,
'Till his friend hails him with the sound of joy.

Hor. Oh never ! never ! never ! thou art innocent :
Simplicity from ill, pure native truth,
And candor of the mind adorn thee ever ;
But there are such, such false ones in the world,
'Twould fill thy gentle soul with wild amazement
To hear their story told.

Lav. False ones, my lord !

Hor.

20 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Hor. Fatally fair they are, and in their smiles
The graces, little loves, and young desires inhabit;
But all that gaze upon 'em are undone;
For they are false, luxurious in their appetites,
And all the heav'n they hope for is variety:
One lover to another still succeeds,
Another, and another after that,
And the last fool is welcome as the former;
'Till having lov'd his hour out, he gives place,
And mingles with the herd that went before him.

Law. Can there be such? and have they peace of
mind?

Have they in all the series of their changing
One happy hour? If women are such things,
How was I form'd so different from my sex!
My little heart is satisfy'd with you;
You take up all the room, as in a cottage
Which harbours some benighted princely stranger,
Where the good man, proud of his hospitality,
Yields all his homely dwelling to his guest,
And hardly keeps a corner for himself.

Hor. Oh, were they all like thee, men would
adore 'em,
And all the bus'ness of their lives be loving;
The nuptial band should be the pledge of peace,
And all domestick cares and quarrels cease;
The world shou'd learn to love by virtuous rules,
And marriage be no more the jest of fools. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Hall.

Enter Calista and Lucilla.

Calista. **B**E dumb for ever, silent as the grave,
Nor let thy fond officious love disturb
My solemn sadness with the sound of joy.
If thou wilt sooth me, tell some dismal tale

Of

Of pining discontent, and black despair;
 For oh! I've gone around through all my thoughts,
 But all are indignation, love, or shame,
 And my dear peace of mind is lost for ever.

Luc. Why do you follow still that wand'ring fire,
 That has misled your weary steps, and leaves you
 Benighted in a wilderness of woe?
 That false *Lothario*! turn from the deceiver;
 Turn, and behold where gentle *Altamont*,
 ' Kind as the softest virgin of our sex,
 ' And faithful as the simple village-swain,
 ' That never knew the courtly vice of changing,'
 Sighs at your feet, and wooes you to be happy.

Cal. Away! I think not of him. My sad soul
 Has form'd a dismal melancholy scene,
 Such a retreat as I wou'd wish to find;
 An unfrequented vale, o'ergrown with trees
 Mossy and old, within whose lonesome shade
 Ravens, and birds ill-omen'd, only dwell:
 No sound to break the silence, but a brook
 That bubbling winds among the weeds: no mark
 Of any human shape that had been there,
 Unless a skeleton of some poor wretch,
 Who had long since, like me, by love undone,
 Sought that sad place out to despair and die in.

Luc. Alas for pity!

Cal. There I fain would hide me
 From the base world, from malice, and from shame;
 For 'tis the solemn counsel of my soul,
 Never to live with public loss of honour:
 'Tis fix'd to die, rather than bear the insolence
 Of each affected she that tells my story,
 And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous.
 To be a tale for fools! scorn'd by the women,
 And pity'd by the men! Oh insupportable!

Luc. Can you perceive the manifest destruction,
 ' The gaping pulph that opens just before you,'
 And yet rush on, tho' conscious of the danger?
 Oh, hear me, hear your ever-faithful creature!
 By all the good I wish, by all the ill

My

22 THE FAIR PENITENT

My trembling heart forebodes, let me intreat you,
Never to see this faithless man again;
Let me forbid his coming.

Cal. On thy life

I charge thee no: my genius drives me;
I must, I will behold him once again,
Perhaps it is the crisis of my fate,
And this one interview shall end my cares.
My lab'ring heart that swells with indignation,
Heaves to discharge the burthen; that once done,
The busy thing shall rest within its cell,
And never beat again.

Luc. Trust not to that:

Rage is the shortest passion of our souls;
Like narrow brooks that rise with sudden show'rs,
It swells in haste, and falls again as soon!
Still as it ebbs the softer thoughts flow in,
And the deceiver love supplies its place.

Cal. I have been wrong'd enough to arm my
temper

Against the smooth delusion; but alas!
(Chide not my weakness, gentle maid, but pity me)
A woman's softness hangs about me still:
Then let me blush, and tell thee all my folly.
I swear I could not see the dear betrayer
Kneel at my feet, and sigh to be forgiven,
But my relenting heart would pardon all,
And quite forget 'twas he that had undone me.

Luc. ' Ye sacred powers, whose gracious providence
' Is watchful for our good, guard me from men,
' From their deceitful tongues, their vows and flatteries;
' Still let me pass neglected by their eyes,
' Let my bloom wither, and my form decay,
' That none may think it worth his while to ruin me,
' And fatal love may never be my bane

' Cal.' Ha! *Altamont?* *Calista*, now be wary,
And guard thy soul's access with dissimbling;
Nor let this hostile husband's eyes explore
The warring passions, and tumultuous thoughts,
That rage within thee, and deform thy reason.

Enter

THE FAIR PENITENT. 23

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Be gone, my cares, I give you to the winds,
Far to be borne, far from the happy *Altamont* ;
' For from this sacred æra of my love,
' A better order of succeeding days
' Comes smiling forward, white and lucky all.'

Calista is the mistress of the year ;
She crowns the season with auspicious beauty,
And bids ev'n all my hours be good and joyful.

Cal. If I were ever mistress of such happiness,
Oh ! wherefore did I play th' unthrifty fool,
And wasting all on others, leave myself
Without one thought of joy to give me comfort ?

[*Aside.*

Alt. Oh, mighty love ! shall that fair face profane
This thy great festival with frowns and sadness !
I swear it sha' not be, for I will woo thee
With sighs so moving, with so warm a transport,
That thou shalt catch the gentle flame from me,
And kindle into joy.

Cal. I tell thee, *Altamont*,
Such hearts as ours were never pair'd above,
Ill suited to each other ; join'd, not match'd ;
Some sullen influence, a foe to both,
Has wrought this fatal marriage to undo us.
Mark but the frame and temper of our minds,
How very much we differ. Ev'n this day,
That fills thee with such ecstasy and transport,
To me brings nothing that should make me bless it,
Or think it better than the day before,
Or any other in the course of time,
That dully took its turn, and was forgotten.

Alt. If to behold thee as my pledge of happiness,
To know none fair, none excellent, but thee ;
If still to love thee with unweary'd constancy,
Through ev'ry season, ev'ry change of life,
Through wrinkled age, through sickness and mis-
fortune,

Be worth the least return of grateful love ;
O then let my *Calista* bless this day,
And set it down for happy.

Cal.

24 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Cal. 'Tis the day
In which my father gave my hand to *Altamont*;
As such I will remember it for ever.

Enter Sciolto, Horatio, and Lavinia.

Sci. Let mirth go on, let pleasure know no pause,
But fill up ev'ry minute of the day.

'Tis yours, my children, sacred to your loves;
The glorious sun himself for you looks gay;
He shines for *Altamont* and for *Calista*,
Let there be musick, let the master touch
The sprightly string, and softly-breathing flute,
'Till harmony rouse ev'ry gentle passion,
Teach the cold maid to lose her fears in love,
And the fierce youth to languish at her feet.
Begin: ev'n age itself is chear'd with musick:
It wakes a glad remembrance of our youth,
Calls back past joys, and warns us into transport.

[*Here an entertainment of music 'and dancing.'*]

' S O N G.

' By Mr. CONGREVE.

I.

' *AH* stay! ah turn! ah, whither would you fly,
' Too charming, too relentless maid?
' I follow not to conquer, but to die;
' You of the fearful are afraid.

II.

' In vain I call; for she, like fleeting air,
' When prest by some tempestuous wind,
' Flies swifter from the voice of my despair,
' Nor casts one pitying look behind.'

Sci. Take care my gates be open, bid all welcome;
All who rejoice with me to-day are friends;
Let each indulge his genius, each be glad,
Jocund and free, and swell the feast with mirth;
The sprightly bowl shall chearfully go round,
None shall be grave, nor too severely wise;
Losses and disappointments, cares and poverty,

The

THE FAIR PENITENT. 25

The rich man's insolence, and great man's scorn,
In wine shall be forgotten all. To-morrow
Will be too soon to think, and to be wretched.
O! grant, ye powers, that I may see these happy.
[*Point. to Alt. and Calista.*
Completely blest, and I have life enough;
And leave the rest indifferently to fate.

Manet Horatio.

Hor. What if, while all are here intent on reveling,
I privately went forth, and sought *Lothario*?
This letter may be forg'd; perhaps the wantonness
Of his vain youth, to stain a lady's fame;
Perhaps his malice to disturb my friend.
Oh no! my heart forebodes it must be true.
Methought ev'n now I mark'd the stars of guilt
That shook her soul; though damn'd dissimulation
Skreen'd her dark thoughts, and set to publick view
A specious face of innocence and beauty.
' O, false appearance! what is all our sovereignty,
' Our boasted pow'r? when they oppose their arts,
' Still they prevail, and we are found their fools.'
With such smooth looks, and many a gentle word,
The first fair she beguil'd her easy lord;
Too blind with love and beauty to beware,
He fell unthinking in the fatal snare;
Nor could believe that such a heav'nly face
Had bargain'd with the devil to damn her wretched
race. [Exit.

S C E N E II.

The street near Sciolto's Palace.

Enter Lothario and Roslano.

Loth. **T**O tell thee then the purport of my thoughts,
The loss of this fond paper would not
give me

A moment of disquiet, were it not
My instrument on this *Altamont*;
Therefore I mean to wait some opportunity
Of speaking with the maid we saw this morning.

R.

Ros.

26 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Ross. I wish you, Sir, to think upon the danger
Of being seen ; to-day their friends are round 'em ;
And any eye that lights by chance on you,
Shall put your life and safety to the hazard.

[They confer aside.]

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Still I must doubt some mystery of mischief,
Some artifice beneath. *Lothario's father!*
I knew him well ; he was sagacious, cunning,
Fluent in words, and bold in peaceful counsels,
But of a cold, unactive hand in war ;
Yet with these coward's virtues he undid
My unsuspecting, valiant, honest friend.
'This son, if fame mistakes not, is more hot,
More open and unartful !—Ha ! he's here ! *[Seeing him.]*

Loth. Damnation ! He again !—This second time
To-day he has cross'd me like my evil genius.

Hor. I fought you, Sir,

Loth. 'Tis well then I am found.

Hor. 'Tis well you are : The man who wrongs my
friend

To the earth's utmost verge would I pursue !
No place, tho' e'er so holy, should protect him ;
No shape that artful fear e'er form'd should hide him,
'Till he fair answer made, and did me justice.

Loth. Ha ! dost thou know me ? that I am *Lothario* ?
As great a name as this proud city boasts of.
Who is this mighty man then, this *Horatio*,
That I should basely hide me from his anger,
Lest he should chide me for his friend's displeasure ?

Hor. The brave, 'tis true, do never shun the light ;
Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers,
Freely without disguise they love and hate,
Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And heav'n and men are judges of their actions.

Loth. Such let 'em be of mine ; there's not a purpose
Which my soul ever fram'd, or my hand acted,
But I could well have bid the world look on,
And what I once durst do, have dar'd to justify.

Hor. Where was this open boldness, this free spirit,
When but this very morning I surpriz'd thee,

In

In base, dishonest privacy, consulting
And bribing a poor mercenary wretch,
To sell her lady's secrets, stain her honor,
And with a forg'd contrivance blast her virtue?—
At sight of me thou fled'st!

Loth. Ha! fled from thee?

Hor. Thou fled'st, and guilt was on thee like a thief,
A pilferer descry'd in some dark corner,
Who there had lodg'd with mischievous intent
To rob and ravage at the hour of rest,
And do a midnight murder on the sleepers.

Loth. Slave! villain!

[*Offers to draw, Rossano holds him.*]

Ross. Hold, my lord! think where you are,
Think how unsafe and hurtful to your honour
It were to urge a quarrel in this place,
And shock the peaceful city with a broil.

Loth. Then, since thou dost provoke my vengeance,
know

I would not for this city's wealth, for all
Which the sea wafts to our *Ligurian* shore,
But that the joys I reap'd with that fond wanton,
The wife of *Altamont*, should be as public
As is the noon-day sun, air, earth, or water,
Or any common benefit of nature.
Think'st thou I meant the shame should be conceal'd?
Oh no! by hell and vengeance, all I wanted
Was some fit messenger to bear the news
To the dull doating husband: now I have found him,
And thou art he.

Hor. I hold thee base enough
To break through law, and spurn at sacred order,
And do a brutal injury like this;
Yet mark me well, young lord; I think *Calista*
Too nice, too noble, and too great of soul,
To be a prey of such a thing as thou art.
'Twas base and poor, unworthy of a man,
To forge a scroll so villainous and loose,
And mark it with a noble lady's name:
These are the mean, dishonest arts of cowards,

28 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Strangers to manhood, and to glorious dangers;
Who, bred at home in idleness and riot,
Ranack for mistresses th' unwholesome stews,
And never know the worth of virtuous love.

Loth. Think'st thou I forg'd the letter? Think so still,
'Till the broad shame come staring in thy face,
And boys shall hoot the cuckold as he passes.

Hor. Away! no woman could descend so low:
A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are,
Fit only for yourselves: You herd together;
And when the circling glass warms your vain hearts,
You talk of beauties that you never saw,
And fancy raptures that you never knew.
• Legends of saints, who never yet had being,
• Or being, ne'er were saints, are not so false
• As the fond tales which you recount of love.'

Loth. But that I do not hold it worth my leisure,
I could produce such damning proof——

Hor. 'Tis false:
You blast the fair with lies because they scorn you,
Hate you like age, like ugliness and impotence:
Rather than make you blest, they would die virgins,
And stop the propagation of mankind.

Loth. It is the curse of fools to be secure,
And that be thine and *Altamont's*. Dream on:
Nor think upon my vengeance 'till thou feel'st it.

Hor. Hold, sir: another word, and then farewell.
'Tho' I think greatly of *Calista's* virtue,
And hold it far beyond thy power to hurt;
Yet as she shares the honour of my *Altamont*,
'That treasure of a soldier bought with blood,
And kept at life's expence, I must not have
(Mark me, young Sir) her very name profan'd.
Learn to restrain the licence of your speech;
'Tis held you are too lavish: when you are met
Among your set of fools, talk of your dress,
Of dice, of whores, of horses, and yourselves;
'Tis safer, and becomes your understandings.

Loth. What if we pass beyond this solemn order,
And, in defiance of the stern *Horatio*,

Indulge

Indulge our gayer thought, let laughter loose,
And use his sacred friendship for our mirth?

Hor. 'Tis well! Sir, you are pleasant——

Loth. By the joys

Which my soul yet has uncontroll'd pursu'd,
I would not turn aside from my least pleasure,
Tho' all thy force were arm'd to bar my way;
But like the birds, great nature's happy commoners,
That haunt in woods, in meads, and flow'ry gardens,
Rifle the sweets, and taste the choicest fruits,
Yet scorn to ask the lordly owner's leave.

Hor. What liberty has vain presumptuous youth,
That thou should'st dare provoke me unchastis'd?
But henceforth, boy, I warn thee, shun my walks;
If in the bounds of yon forbidden place
Again thou'rt found, expect a punishment,
Such as great souls, impatient of an injury,
Exact from those who wrong 'em much, ev'n death;
Or something worse; an injur'd husband's vengeance
Shall print a thousand wounds, tear thy fine form,
And scatter thee to all the winds of heav'n.

Loth. Is then my way in *Genoa* prescrib'd
By a dependent on the wretched *Altamont*,
A talking sir, that brawls for him in taverns,
And vouches for his valour's reputation?

Hor. Away, thy speech is fouler than thy manners.

Loth. Or if there be a name more vile, his parasite,
A beggar's parasite?

Hor. Now learn humanity.

[*Offers to strike him, Rossano interposes.*
Since brutes and boys are only taught with blows.

Loth. Damnation! [They draw.

Ross. Hold, this goes no further here.

'*Horatio*, 'tis too much; already see

'The crowd are gath'ring to us.'

Loth. O *Rossano*!

Or give me way, or thou'rt no more my friend.

Ross. *Sciolto's* servants have ta'en th' alarm;
You'll be oppress'd by numbers: 'be advis'd,
'Or I must force you hence;' take't on my word,

30 THE FAIR PENITENT.

You shall have justice done you on *Horatio*.
Put up, my lord.

Loth. This wo't not brook delay;
West of the town a mile, among the rocks,
Two hours ere noon to-morrow I expect thee.
Thy single hand to mine.

Hor. I'll meet thee there.

Loth. To-morrow, oh my better stars! to-morrow
Exert your influence, shine strongly for me;
'Tis not a common conquest I would gain,
Since love, as well as arms, must grace my triumph.

Exeunt Lothario and Roslano.

Hor. Two hours ere noon to-morrow! ha! ere that
He sees *Calista*! Oh unthinking fool——
What if I urg'd her with her crime and danger?
If any spark from heav'n remain unquench'd
Within her breast, my breath perhaps may wake it;
Cou'd I but prosper there, I wou'd not doubt
My combat with that loud vain-glorious boaster.
Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust,
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,
So many of your sex would not in vain
Of broken vows, and faithless men, complain:
Of all the various wretches love has made,
How few have been by men of sense betray'd!
Convinc'd by reason, they your pow'r confess,
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And, conscious of your worth, can never love you less.

Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *an apartment in Sciolto's palace.*

Enter Sciolto and Calista.

Sci. **N**OW by my life, my honour, 'tis too much;
Have I not mark'd thee, wayward as thou art,
Perverse and sullen all this day of joy?
When ev'ry heart was chear'd, and mirth went round,
Sorrow

Sorrow, displeasure, and repining anguish,
 Sat on thy brow; 'like some malignant planet,
 ' Foe to the harvest, and the healthy year,
 ' Who scouls adverse, and lours upon the world;
 ' When all the other stars, with gentle aspect,
 ' Propitious shine, and meaning good to man.'

Cal. Is then the task of duty half perform'd?
 Has not your daughter given herself to *Altamont*,
 Yielded the native freedom of her will
 To an imperious husband's lordly rule,
 To gratify a father's stern command?

Sci. Dost thou complain?

Cal. For pity do not frown then,
 If in despite of all my vow'd obedience,
 A sigh breaks out, or a tear falls by chance:
 For oh! that sorrow which has drawn your anger,
 Is the sad native of *Calista's* breast,
 ' And once possess'd will never quit its dwelling,
 ' 'Till life, the prop of all, shall leave the building,
 ' To tumble down, and moulder into ruin.'

Sci. Now by the sacred dust of that dear saint
 That was thy mother; by her wond'rous goodness,
 Her soft, her tender, most complying sweetness,
 I swear some sullen thought that shuns the light
 Lurks underneath that sadness in thy visage.
 But mark me well, tho' by yon heaven I love thee,
 As much, I think, as a fond parent can;
 Yet shou'dst thou (which the pow'rs above forbid)
 E'er stain the honour of thy name with infamy,
 I'll cast thee off, as one whose impious hands
 Had rent asunder nature's nearest ties,
 Which once divided never join again.
 To-day, I've made a noble youth thy husband;
 Consider well his worth, reward his love;
 Be willing to be happy, and thou art so. [*Exit Sciote.*]

Cal. How hard is the condition of our sex,
 Thro' ev'ry state of life the slaves of man!
 In all the dear delightful days of youth,
 A rigid father dictates to our wills,
 And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand:

32 THE FAIR PENITENT.

To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds;
Proud with opinion of superior reason,
He holds domestic bus'ness and devotion
All we are capable to know, and shuts us,
Like cloister'd idiots, from the world's acquaintance,
And all the joys of freedom. Wherefore are we
Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,
Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
And claim an equal empire o'er the world?

Enter Horatio.

Hor. She's here! yet oh! my tongue is at a loss:
Teach me, some pow'r, that happy art of speech,
To dress my purpose up in gracious words;
Such as may softly steal upon her soul,
And never waken the tempestuous passions.
By heav'n she weeps!—Forgive me, fair *Calista*,
If I presume, on privilege of friendship,
To join my grief to yours, and mourn the evils
That hurt your peace, and quench those eyes in tears.

Cal. To steal unlook'd for on my private sorrow,
Speak not the man of honour, nor the friend,
But rather means the spy.

Hor. Unkindly said!

For oh! as sure as you accuse me falsely,
I come to prove myself *Calista's* friend.

Cal. You are my husband's friend, the friend of
Altamont.

Hor. Are you not one? Are you not join'd by heav'n,
Each interwoven with the other's fate?

'Are you not mix'd like streams of meeting rivers
'Whose blended waters are no more distinguish'd,
'But roll into the sea, one common flood?'

Then, who can give his friendship but to one?
Who can be *Altamont's* and not *Calista's*?

Cal. Force, and the wills of our imperious rulers,
May bind two bodies in one wretched chain;
But minds will still look back to their own choice.

So the poor captive in a foreign realm
'Stands on the shore, and sends his wishes back
'To the dear native land from whence he came.

Hor.

Hor. When souls that should agree to will the same,
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues :
Love shall be banish'd from the genial bed,
The night shall all be lonely and unquiet,
And ev'ry day shall be a day of cares.

Cal. Then all the boasted office of thy friendship,
Was but to tell *Calista* what a wretch she is ;
Alas ! what needed that ?

Hor. Oh ! rather say,
I came to tell her how she might be happy ;
To sooth the secret anguish of her soul,
To comfort that fair mourner, that forlorn one,
And teach her steps to know the paths of peace.

Cal. Say thou, to whom this paradise is known,
Where lies the blissful region ? mark my way to it,
For oh ! 'tis sure, I long to be at rest.

Hor. Then—to be good is to be happy ;—angels
Are happier than mankind, because they are better ;
Guilt is the source of sorrow ; 'tis the fiend,
'Th' avenging fiend, that follows us behind
With whips and stings ; the blest know none of this,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind,
And find the height of all their heav'n is goodness.

Cal. And what bold parasite's officious tongue
Shall dare to tax *Calista's* name with guilt ?

Hor. None should ; but 'tis a busy, talking world,
That with licentious breath, blows like the wind,
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Cal. What mystic riddle lurks beneath thy words,
Which thou would'st seem unwilling to express,
As if it meant dishonour to my virtue ?
Away with this ambiguous shuffling phrase,
And let thy oracle be understood.

Hor. *Lothario* !

Cal. Ha ! what would'st thou mean by him ?

Hor. *Lothario* and *Calista* !—Thus they join
Two names, which heav'n decreed should never meet ;
Hence have the talkers of this populous city

34 THE FAIR PENITENT.

A shameful tale to tell for public sport,
Of an unhappy beauty, a false fair one,
Who plighted to a noble youth her faith,
When she had given her honour to a wretch.

Cal. Death and confusion! have I liv'd to this?
Thus to be treated with unmanly insolence!
To be the sport of a loose ruffian's tongue!
Thus to be us'd! thus! like the vilest creature,
That ever was a slave to vice and infamy.

Hor. By honour and fair truth, you wrong me much;
For on my soul, nothing but strong necessity
Cou'd urge my tongue to this ungrateful office:
I came with strong reluctance, as if death
Had stood a-cross my way to save your honour,
Yours and *Sciolto's*, yours and *Altamont's*;
Like one who ventures through a burning pile,
To save his tender wife, with all her brood
Of little fondlings, from the dreadful ruin.

Cal. Is this, is this the famous friend of *Altamont*,
For noble worth and deeds of arms renown'd?
Is this! this tale-bearing officious fellow,
That watches for intelligence from eyes;
This wretched *Argus* of a jealous husband,
That fills his easy ears with monstrous tales,
Which make him toss, and rave, and wreak at length
Bloody revenge on his defenceless wife;
Who guiltless dies, because her fool ran mad?

Hor. Alas! this rage is vain; for if your fame
Or peace be worth your care, you must be calm,
And listen to the means are left to save 'em.
'Tis now the lucky minute of your fate.
By me your genius speaks, by me it warns you,
Never to see that curst *Lothario* more;
Unless you mean to be despis'd, be shunn'd
By all our virtuous maids and noble matrons;
Unless you have devoted this rare beauty
To infamy, diseases, prostitution——

Cal. Dishonour blast thee, base, unmanner'd slave!
That dar'st forget my birth, and sacred sex,
And shock me with the rude unhallow'd sound!

Hor.

Hor. Here kneel, and in the awful face of heav'n
Breath out a solemn vow, never to see,
Nor think, if possible, on him that ruin'd thee;
Or by my *Altamont's* dear life I swear,
This paper! Nay, you must not fly!—This paper,
[*Holding her.*

This guilty paper shall divulge your shame——

Cal. What mean'st thou by that paper? What contrivance

Hast thou been forging to deceive my father,
To turn his heart against his wretched daughter,
That *Altamont* and thou may share his wealth?
A wrong like this will make me e'en forgot
The weakness of my sex.—Oh, for a sword,
To urge my vengeance on the villain's hand
That forg'd the scroll!

Hor. Behold, can this be forg'd?
See where *Calista's* name——[*Shewing the letter near.*

Cal. To atoms thus, [Tearing it.
Thus let me tear the vile, detested falshood,
The wicked lying evidence of shame.

Hor. Confusion!

Cal. Henceforth, thou officious fool,
Meddle no more, nor dare ev'n on thy life
To breathe an accent that may touch my virtue.
I am myself the guardian of my honour,
And will not bear so insolent a monitor.

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Where is my life, my love, my charming bride,
Joy of my heart, and pleasure of my eyes,
' The wish, and care, and business of my youth?
' Oh! let me find her, snatch her to my breast,
' And tell her she delays my bliss too long,
' Till my soft soul ev'n sickens with desire.'
Disorder'd!—and in tears!—*Horatio* too!
My friend is in amaze?—What can it mean?
Tell me, *Calista*, who has done thee wrong,
That my swift sword may find out the offender,
And do thee ample justice.

Cal. Turn to him.

Alts

Alt. Horatio!

Cal. To that insolent.

Alt. My friend?

Could he do this? He, who was half myself?
One faith has ever bound us, and one reason
Guided our wills: have I not found him just,
Honest as truth itself? and cou'd he break
The sanctity of friendship? Could he wound
The heart of *Altamont* in his *Calista*?

Cal. I thought what justice I should find from thee!
Go fawn upon him, listen to his tale,
Applaud his malice, that wou'd blast my fame,
And treat me like a common prostitute.
'Thou art perhaps confederate in his mischief,
And wilt believe the legend, if he tells it.

Alt. Oh impious! what presumptuous wretch shall dare
To offer an injury like that?

Priesthood, nor age, nor cowardice itself,
Shall save him from the fury of my vengeance.

Cal. The man who dar'd to do it was *Horatio*!
Thy darling friend! 'Twas *Altamont's Horatio*!
But mark me well! while thy divided heart
Doats on a villain that has wrong'd me thus,
No force shall drag me to thy hated bed;
Nor can my cruel father's pow'r do more
Than shut me in a cloister; there, well pleas'd,
Religious hardships will I learn to bear,
To fast, and freeze at midnight hours of pray'r.
Nor think it hard, within a lonely cell,
With melancholy, speechless saints to dwell:
But bless the day I to that refuge ran,
Free from the marriage chain, and from that tyrant
man. [Exit *Calista*.

Alt. She's gone; and as she went, ten thousand fires
Shot from her angry eyes, as if she meant
Too well to keep the cruel vow she made.
Now as thou art a man, *Horatio*, tell me,
What means this wild confusion in thy looks?
As if thou wert at variance with thyself,
Madness and reason combating within thee,

And

And thou wert doubtful which shou'd get the better?

Hor. I wou'd be dumb for ever, but thy fate
Has otherwise decreed it: thou hast seen
That idol of thy soul, that fair *Calista*,
Thou hast beheld her tears.

Alt. I have seen her weep,
I have seen that lovely one, that dear *Calista*,
Complaining in the bitterness of sorrow,
That thou my friend *Horatio*! thou hast wrong'd her.

Hor. That I have wrong'd her! had her eyes been fed
From that rich stream which warms her heart, and
number'd

For every falling tear a drop of blood,
It had not been too much; for she has ruin'd thee,
Ev'n thee, my *Altamont*! She has undone thee.

Alt. Dost thou join ruin with *Calista*'s name?
What is so fair, so exquisitely good?
Is she not more than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy, when they love?
Does she not come, like wisdom, or good fortune,
Replete with blessings, giving wealth and honour?
The dowry which she brings is peace and pleasure,
And everlasting joys are in her arms.

Hor. It had been better thou hadst liv'd a beggar,
And fed on scraps at great men's surly doors,
Than to have match'd with one so false, so fatal.——

Alt. It is too much for friendship to allow thee:
Because I tamely bore the wrong thou didst her,
Thou dost avow the barb'rous, brutal part,
And urge the injury ev'n to my face.

Hor. I see she has got possession of thy heart,
She has charm'd thee, like a syren, to her bed,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds:
'Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wreckt upon the faithless shore,
'Then vainly wish thou hadst not left thy friend,
To follow her delusion.

Alt. If thy friendship
Do churlishly deny my love a room,
It is not worth my keeping, I disclaim it.

Hor.

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Hor. Canst thou so soon forget what I've been to thee?
I shar'd the task of nature with thy father,
And form'd with care thy inexperienc'd youth
To virtue and to arms.

'Thy noble father, oh thou light young man!
Wou'd he have us'd me thus? One fortune fed us;
For his was ever mine, mine his, and both
Together flourish'd, and together fell.
He call'd me friend, like thee: wou'd he have left me
Thus? for a woman! nay a vile one too?

Alt. Thou canst not, dar'st not mean it; speak again,
Say, who is vile? but dare not name *Calista*.

Hor. I had not spoke at first, unless compell'd,
And forc'd to clear myself; but since thus urg'd,
I must avow I do not know a viler.

Alt. Thou wert my father's friend, he lov'd thee well;
A kind of venerable mark of him
Hangs round thee, and protects thee from my vengeance:
I cannot, dare not lift my sword against thee,
But henceforth never let me see thee more. [*Going out.*]

Hor. I love thee still, ungrateful as thou art,
And must, and will preserve thee from dishonour,
Ev'n in despite of thee. [*Holds him.*]

Alt. Let go my arm.

Hor. If honour be thy care, if thou would'st live
Without the name of credulous, wittol husband,
Avoid thy bride, shun her detested bed,
'The joys it yields are dash'd with poison——

Alt. Off!

To urge me but a minute more is fatal.

Hor. She is polluted! stain'd!

Alt. Madness and raging!

But hence!

Hor. Dishonour'd by the man you hate——

Alt. 'I pr'ythee loose me yet,' for thy own sake,
If life be worth the keeping——

Hor. By *Lothario*.

Alt. Perdition take thee, villain, for the falsehood!

[*Strikes him.*]

Now nothing but thy life can make atonement.

Hor. A blow!

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Hor. A blow! Thou hast us'd me well—— [*Draws.*

Alt. This to thy heart——

Hor. Yet hold!—By heav'n, his father's in his face.
Spite of my wrongs, my heart runs o'er with tenderness,

And I cou'd rather die myself than hurt him.

Alt. Defend thyself, for by my much wrong'd love,
I swear the poor evasion shall not save thee.

Hor. Yet hold! thou know'st I dare!—Think how
we've liv'd——

[*They fight*; *Altamont presses on Horatio,*
who retires.

Nay! then 'tis brutal violence! And thus,
Thus Nature bids me guard the life she gave.

[*They fight.*

Lavinia enters and runs between their swords.

Lav. My brother, my *Horatio*! is it possible?
Oh! turn your cruel swords upon *Lavinia*.
If you must quench your impious rage in blood,
Behold, my heart shall give you all her store,
To save those dearer streams that flow from yours.

Alt. 'Tis well thou hast found a safeguard; none
but this,

No pow'r on earth could save thee from my fury.

'*Lav.* O fatal deadly sound!'

Hor. Safety from thee!

Away, vain boy! Hast thou forgot the reverence
Due to my arm, thy first, thy great example,
Which pointed out thy way to noble daring,
And shew'd thee what it was to be a man?

Lav. What busy, meddling fiend, what foe to
goodness,

Could kindle such a discord? 'Oh, lay by
'Those most ungentle looks, and angry weapons,
'Unless you mean my griefs and killing fears
'Should stretch me out at your relentless feet,
'A wretched corpse, the victim of your fury.'

Hor. Ask'st thou what made us foes? 'Twas base
ingratitude:

'Twas such a sin to friendship, as heav'n's mercy,
'That

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'That strives with man's untoward monstrous wickedness,
'Unwearied with forgiving, scarce could pardon.'
He who was all to me, child! brother! friend!
With barb'rous, bloody malice, fought my life.

Alt. Thou art my sister, and I would not make thee
The lonely mourner of a widow'd bed,
Therefore thy husband's life is safe; but warn him,
No more to know this hospitable roof.
He has but ill repaid *Sciolto's* bounty;
We must not meet; 'tis dangerous: farewell.

[*He is going, Lavinia holds him.*]

Lav. Stay, *Altamont*, my brother, stay, if ever
Nature, or what is nearer much than nature,
The kind consent of our agreeing minds,
Have made us dear to one another; stay,
And speak one gentle word to your *Horatio*.
Behold, his anger melts, he longs to love you,
To call you friend, then press you hard, with all
The tender, speechless joy of reconciliation.

Alt. It cannot, sha' not be!—you must not hold me.

Lav. Look kindly then!

Alt. Each minute that I stay,
Is a new injury to fair *Calista*.

From thy false friendship to her arms I'll fly:

'There, if in any pause of love I rest,
'Breathless with bliss, upon her panting breast,
'In broken melting accents, I will swear,
'Henceforth to trust my heart with none but her:'
Then own the joys, which on her charms attend,
Have more than paid me for my faithless friend.

[*Altamont breaks from Lavinia, and exits.*]

Hor. Oh, raise thee, my *Lavinia*, from the earth;
It is too much, this tide of flowing grief,
This wond'rous waste of tears, too much to give
To an ungrateful friend, and cruel brother.

Lav. Is there not cause for weeping? Oh *Horatio*!
A brother and a husband were my treasure,
This was all the little wealth that poor *Lavinia*
Sav'd from the shipwreck of her father's fortunes.
One half is lost already; if thou leav'st me,

IF

THE FAIR PENITENT. 41

If thou should'st prove unkind to me, as *Altamont*,
Whom shall I find to pity my distress,
To have compassion on a helpless wanderer,
And give her where to lay her wretched head?

Hor. Why dost thou wound me with thy soft complainings?

Tho' *Altamont* be false, and use me hardly,
Yet think not I impute his crimes to thee.
Talk not of being forsaken, for I'll keep thee,
Next to my heart, my certain pledge of happiness.
'Heav'n form'd thee gentle, fair, and full of goodness,
'And made thee all my portion here on earth;
'It gave thee to me, as a large amends
'For fortune, friends, and all the world beside.'

Lav. Then you will love me still, cherish me ever,
And hide me from misfortune in your bosom:

'Here end my cares, nor will I lose one thought,
'How we shall live, or purchase food and raiment.
'The holy pow'r, who cloaths the senseless earth,
'With woods, with fruits, with flow'rs and verdant grass,
'Whose bounteous hand feeds the whole brute creation
'Knows all our wants, and has enough to give us.'

Hor. from *Genoa*, from falshood and inconstancy,
To some more honest distant clime we'll go;
Nor will I be beholden to my country,
For ought but thee, the partner of my flight.

Lav. Yes, I will follow thee; forsake, for thee,
My country, brother, friends, ev'n all I have;
Tho' mine's a little all; yet were it more,
And better far, it shou'd be left for thee,
And all that I would keep should be *Horatio*.

So when a merchant sees his vessel lost,
Tho' richly freighted from a foreign coast,
Gladly, for life, the treasure he'wou'd give:
And only wishes to escape, and live.

Gold and his gains no more employ his mind,
But driving o'er the billows with the wind,
Cleaves to one faithful plank, and leaves the rest
behind. *Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A G A R D E N.

‘ Enter ALTAMONT. ’

‘ *Alt.* **W**ITH what unequal tempers are we form’d ?
 ‘ One day the soul supine with ease and
 fulness.
 ‘ Revels secure, and fondly tells herself
 ‘ The hour of Evil can return no more ;
 ‘ The next, the spirits pall’d, and sick of riot,
 ‘ Turn all to discord, and we hate our beings,
 ‘ Curse the past joy, and think it folly all,
 ‘ And bitterness, and anguish. Oh ! last night !
 ‘ What has ungrateful beauty paid me back,
 ‘ For all that mass of friendship which I squander’d ?
 ‘ Coldness, aversion, tears, and sullen sorrow,
 ‘ Dash’d all my blifs, and damp’d my bridal bed.
 ‘ Soon as the morning dawn’d, she vanish’d from me,
 ‘ Relentless to the gentle call of love.
 ‘ I have lost a friend, and I have gain’d——a wife ?
 ‘ Turn not to thought, my brain ; but let me find
 ‘ Some unfrequented shade, there lay me down,
 ‘ And let forgetful dulness steal upon me.
 ‘ To soften and assuage this pain of thinking. [*Exit*]

Enter Lothario and Calista,

Loth. Weep not my fair, but let the god of love
 Laugh in ~~thine~~ eyes, in thy heart,
 Kindle again his touch, and hold it high,
 To light us to new joys ; nor let a thought
 Of discord, or disquiet past, molest thee ;
 But to a long oblivion give thy cares,
 And let us melt the present hour in blifs.

Cal. Seek not to sooth me with thy false endearments,
 To charm me with thy softness : ’tis in vain :
 Thou canst no more betray, nor I be ruin’d.
 The hours of folly, and of fond del’ght.

Are

Are wasted all, and fled; those that remain
 Are doom'd to weeping, anguish, and repentance:
 I come to charge thee with a long account,
 Of all the sorrows I have known already,
 And all I have to come; thou hast undone me.

Loth. Unjust *Calista*! dost thou call it ruin,
 To love as we have done; to melt, to languish,
 To wish for somewhat exquisitely happy,
 And then be blest even to that wish's height?
 To die with joy, and strait to live again;
 Speechless to gaze, and with tumultuous transport—

Cal. Oh let me hear no more, I cannot bear it;
 'Tis deadly to remembrance; let that night,
 That guilty night be blotted from the year;
 ' Let not the voice of mirth or music know it,
 ' Let it be dark and desolate, no stars
 ' To glitter o'er it; let it wish for light,
 ' Yet want it still, and vainly wait the dawn;
 For 'twas the night that gave me up to shame,
 To sorrow, to the perfidious false *Lothario*.

Loth. Hear this, ye pow'rs! mark the fair deceiver
 Sadly complains of violated truth;
 She calls me false, even she, the faithless she,
 Whom day and night, whom heav'n and earth have heard
 Sighing to vow, and tenderly protest,
 Ten thousand times, she would be only mine;
 And yet, behold, she has given herself away,
 Fled from my arms, and wedded to another,
 Ev'n to the man whom most I hate on earth.—

Cal. Art thou so base to upbraid me with a crime,
 Which nothing but thy cruelty could cause?
 If indignation raging in my soul,
 For thy unmanly insolence and scorn,
 Urg'd me to do a deed of desperation,
 And wound myself to be reveng'd on thee,
 Think whom I should devote to death and hell.
 Whom curse as my undoer, but *Lothario*;
 Hadst thou been just, not all *Sciolto's* pow'r,
 Not all the vows and pray'rs of fighting *Altamont*,
 Could have prevail'd, or won me to forsake thee.

Loth.

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Loth. How have I fail'd in justice, or in love ?
Burns not my flame as brightly as at first ?
Ev'n now my heart beats high, I languish for thee,
My transports are as fierce as strong my wishes,
As if thou hadst never blest me with thy beauty.

Cal. How ! didst thou dare to think that I would live
A slave to base desires, and brutal pleasures ?
'To be a wretched wanton for thy leisures,
'To toy, and waste an hour of idle time with ?
My soul disdains thee for so mean a thought.

Loth. The driving storm of passion will have way,
And I must yield before it ; wert thou calm,
Love, the poor criminal, whom thou has doom'd,
Has yet a thousand tender things to plead,
'To charm thy rage, and mitigate his fate.

Enter behind them Altamont.

Alt. I have lost my peace—Ha ! do I live and wake ?

Cal. Hadst thou been true, how happy had I been ?
Not *Altamont*, but thou hadst been my lord,
But wherefore nam'd I happiness with thee ?
It is for thee, for thee, that I am curst ;
For thee my secret soul each hour arraigns me,
Calls me to answer for my virtue stain'd,
My honour lost to thee ; for thee it haunts me ;
With stern *Sciolto* vowing vengeance on me ;
With *Altamont* complaining for his wrongs——

Alt. Behold him here—— [*Coming forward.*

Cal. Ah ? [*Starting.*

Alt. The wretch ! whom thou hast made :
Curse and sorrows hast thou heap'd upon him.
And vengeance is the only good is left. [*Drawing.*

Loth. Thou hast ta'en me somewhat unawares, 'tis true ;
But love and war take turns like day and night,
And little preparation serves my turn,
Equal to both, and arm'd for either field.
We've long been foes, this moment ends our quarrel ;
Earth, heav'n, and fair *Calista* judge the combat !

Cal. Distraction ! fury ! sorrow ! shame ! and death ;

Alt. Thou hast talk'd too much, thy breath is poison.
' It taints the ambient air ; this for my father, [*to me ;*
' This

* This for *Sciolto*, and this last for *Altamont*.

[*They fight, Lothario falls.*

Lotb. Oh *Altamont* ! thy genius is the stronger,
Thou hast prevail'd ?—My fierce ambitious soul
Declining droops, and all her fires grow pale;
Yet let not this advantage swell thy pride,
I conquer'd in my turn, in love I triumph'd :
Those joys are lodg'd beyond the reach of fate ;
That sweet revenge comes smiling to my thoughts,
Adorns my fall, and cheers my heart in dying. [*Dies.*

Cal. And what remains for me beset with shame,
Encompass'd round with wretchedness ? There is
But this one way to break the toil, and 'scape.

[*She catches up Lorathio's sword, and offers to kill her-
self; Altamont runs to her, and wrests it from her.*

Alt. What means thy frantick rage ?

Cal. Off ! let me go.

Alt. Oh ! thou has more than murder'd me ; yet still,
Still art thou here ! and my soul starts with horror,
At thought of any danger that may reach thee.

Cal. Think'st thou I mean to live ? to be forgiven ?
Oh ! thou hast known but little of *Calista* ;
If thou hadst never heard my shame, if only
The midnight moon and silent stars had seen it,
I wou'd not bear to be reproach'd by them,
But dig down deep to find a grave beneath,
And hide me from their beams.

[*Sciolto within.*] What ho ! my son !

* *Alt.* Is it *Sciolto* calls ; come near and find me
The wretched'st thing of all my kind on earth

Cal. It is the voice of thunder, or my father ?
Madness ! confusion ! let the storm come on,
Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me,
Dash my devoted bark ; ye surges, break it ?
'Tis for my ruin that the tempest rises.
When I am lost, sunk to the bottom low,
Peace shall return, and all be calm again.

Enter

46 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Enter Sciolto.

Sci. Ev'n now *Rossano* leap'd the garden walls—
Ha! death has been among you—Oh my fears!
Last night thou hadst a diff'rence with thy friend,
The cause thou gav'st me for it was a damn'd one;
Didst thou not wrong the man who told thee truth?
Answer me quick—

Alt. Oh! press me not to speak;
Ev'n now my heart is breaking, and the mention
Will lay me dead before you: see that body
And guess my shame! my ruin! oh *Calista*!

Sci. It is enough! but I am slow to execute,
And justice lingers in my lazy hand;
Thus let me wipe dishonor from my name,
And cut thee from the earth, thou stain to goodness—

Offers to kill Calista, Altamont holds him.

Alt. Stay thee, *Sciolto*, thou rash father, stay,
Or turn the point on me, and through my breast
Cut out the bloody passage to *Calista*;
So shall my love be perfect, while for her
I die, for whom alone I wish'd to live.

Cal. No, *Altamont*; my heart, that scorn'd thy love,
Shall never be indebted to thy pity;
Thus torn, defac'd, and wretched as I seem,
Still I have something of *Sciolto's* virtue.
Yes, yes, my father, I applaud thy justice;
Strike home, and I will bless thee for the blow:
Be merciful, and free me from my pain;
'Tis sharp, 'tis terrible, and I cou'd curse
The chearful day, men, earth, and Heav'n, and thee,
Ev'n thee, thou venerable, good old man,
For being author of a wretch like me.

Alt. Listen not to the wildness of her raving;
Remember nature! Shou'd thy daughter's murder
Defile that hand, so just, so great in arms,
Her blood wou'd rest upon thee to posterity,
Pollute thy name, and sully all thy wars.

' *Cal.* Have I not wrong'd his gentle nature much?
' And yet behold him pleading for my life:
' Lost as thou art to virtue, oh *Calista*!

I think

- I think thou canst not bear to be outdone :
- Then haste to die, and be oblig'd no more.'

Sci. Thy pious care has given me time to think,
And sav'd me from a crime ; then rest, my sword ;
To honour have I kept thee ever sacred,
Nor will I stain thee with a rash revenge :
But, mark me well, I will have justice done ;
Hope not to bear away thy crimes unpunish'd,
I will see justice executed on thee,
Ev'n to a *Roman* strictness ; and thou, nature,
Or whatsoe'er thou art that plead'st within me,
Be still ; thy tender strugglings are in vain.

Cal. Then am I doom'd to live and bear your triumph ?

To groan beneath your scorn and fierce upbraiding,
' Daily to be reproach'd, and have my misery
' At morn, at noon, at night told over to me,
' Lest my remembrance might grow pitiful,
' And grant a moment's interval of peace ;'
Is this, is this the mercy of a father ?
I only beg to die, and he denies me.

Sci. Hence from my sight, thy father cannot bear thee ;
Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,
Where on the confines of eternal night,
Mourning, misfortune, cares, and anguish dwell ;
Where ugly shame hides her opprobrious head,
And death and hell detested rule maintain ;
' There howl out the remainder of thy life,
And wish thy name may be no more remember'd.

Cal. Yes, I will fly to some such dismal place,
And be more curst than you can wish I were ;
This fatal form, that drew on my undoing,
Fasting, and tears, and hardship shall destroy ;
Nor light, nor food, nor comfort will I know,
Nor ought that may continue hated life.
Then when you see me meagre, wan, and chang'd,
Stretch'd at my length, and dying in my cave,
On that cold earth I mean shall be my grave,
Perhaps you may relent, and sighing say,
At length her tears have wash'd her stains away ;

At

48 THE FAIR PENITENT.

At length 'tis time her punishment should cease;
Die, thou poor suffering wretch, and be at peace.

[Exit Calista.

Sci. Who of my servants wait there?

Enter a servant.

On your lives
Take care my doors be guarded well, that none
Pass out, or enter but by my appointment.

[Exit servant.

Alt. There is a fatal fury in your visage,
It blazes fierce, and menaces destruction:
' My father, I am sick of many sorrows,
' Ev'n now my easy heart is breaking with 'em;
' Yet, above all, one fear distracts me most;
I tremble at the vengeance which you meditate
On the poor, faithless, lovely, dear *Calista*.

Sci. Hast thou not read what brave *Virginus* did?
With his own hand he slew his only daughter,
To save her from the fierce *Decemvir's* lust.
He slew her yet unspotted, to prevent
The shame which she might know. Then what should
I do?

But thou hast ty'd my hand.—I wo'not kill her;
Yet by the ruin she has brought upon us,
' The common infamy that brands us both,'
She sha'not 'scape.

Alt. You mean that she shall die then?

Sci. Ask me not what, nor how I have resolv'd,
For all within is anarchy and uproar.
Oh *Altamont*! What a vast scheme of joy
Has this one day destroy'd? Well did I hope
This daughter wou'd have blest my latter days,
That I should live to see you the world's wonder,
So happy, great, and good, that none were like you.
While I, from busy life and care set free,
Had spent the evening of my age at home,
Among a little prattling race of yours:
There like an old man talk'd a while, and then
Laid down and slept in peace. Instead of this,

Sorrow

Sorrow and shame must bring me to my grave—
Oh damn her! damn her!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Arm yourself, my lord :
Rossano, who but now escap'd the garden,
Has gather'd in the street a band of rioters,
Who threaten you and all your friends with ruin,
Unless *Lothario* be return'd in safety.

Sci. By heav'n, their fury rises to my wish,
Nor shall misfortune know my house alone,
But thou, *Lothario*, and thy race shall pay me
For all the sorrows which my age is curst with.
I think my name as great, my friends as potent,
As any in the state ; all shall be summon'd ;
I know that all will join their hands to ours,
And vindicate thy vengeance. Raise the body,
And bear it in ; his friends shall buy him dearly,
I will have blood for ransom : When our force
Is full, and arm'd, we shall expect thy sword
To join with us, and sacrifice to justice.

[*Ex. Sciolto "and Altamont."*]

[*The body of Lothario is carried off by Servants.*]

Manet Altamont.

Alt. There is a stupid weight upon my senses ;
A dismal fullen stillness, that succeeds
The storm of rage and grief, like silent death.
After the tumult and the noise of life.
Wou'd it were death, as sure 'tis wondrous like it,
For I am sick of living : my soul's pall'd,
She kindles not with anger or revenge :
Love was th' informing, active fire within ;
Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
And longs to mingle with its kindred earth.

[*A tumultuous noise, with clashing of swords as
at a little distance.*]

Enter Lavinia with two Servants, their swords drawn.

Lav. Fly, swiftly fly, to my *Horatio's* aid,
Nor lose your vain officious cares on me ;
Bring me my lord, my husband to my arms ;
He is *Lavinia's* life, bring him me safe,

C

And

50 THE FAIR PENITENT.

And I shall be at ease, be well and happy.

[*Exeunt Servants.*]

Alt. Art thou *Lavinia*? Oh! what barb'rous hand
Could wrong thy poor defenceless innocence,
' And leave such marks of more than savage fury?'

Lav. My brother! O my heart is full of fears;
Perhaps ev'n now my dear *Horatio* bleeds.—
Not far from hence, as passing to the port,
By a mad multitude we were surrounded,
Who ran upon us with uplifted swords,
And cry'd aloud for vengeance, and *Lothario*.
My lord with ready boldness stood the shock,
To shelter me from danger; but in vain,
Had not a party from *Sciofio's* palace
Rush'd out, and snatch'd me from amidst the fray.

Alt. What of my friend?

Lav. Ha! by my Joys 'tis he! [*Looking out.*]
He lives, he comes to bless me, he is safe!

*Enter Horatio, with two or three Servants, their
swords drawn.*

1 Serv. 'Twere at the utmost hazard of your life
To venter forth again, till we are stronger:
Their number trebles ours.

Hor. No matter, let it;
Death is not half so shocking as that traitor.
My honest soul is mad with indignation,
To think her plainness could be so abus'd
As to mistake that wretch, and call him friend;
I cannot bear the sight.

Alt. Open thou, earth,
Gape wide, and take me down to thy dark bosom,
To hide me from *Horatio*.

Hor. Oh *Lavinia*!
Believe not but I joy to see thee safe:
Wou'd our ill fortune had not drove us hither:
I cou'd ev'n wish we rather had been wreckt
On any other shore, than sav'd on this.

Lav. Oh, let us bless the mercy that preserv'd us,
That gracious pow'r that sav'd us for each other:
And, to adorn the sacrifice of praise,

Offer

Offer forgiveness too : be thou like heav'n,
And put away th' offences of thy friend,
Far, far from thy remembrance,

Alt. I have mark'd him,

' To see if one forgiving glance stole hither;
' If any spark of friendship were alive,
' That wou'd by sympathy at meeting glow,
' And strive to kindle up the flame a-new;
' 'Tis lost, 'tis gone; his soul is quite estrang'd
' And knows me for its counterpart no more.

Hor. Thou know'st thy rule, thy empire in *Horatio*;
' Nor canst thou ask in vain, command in vain,
' Where nature, reason, nay, where love is judge;
' But when you urge my temper to comply
' With what it most abhors, I cannot do it.

Lav. Where didst thou get this sullen gloomy hate?
' It was not in thy nature to be thus;
' Come put it off, and let thy heart be chearful,
' Be gay again, and know the joy's of friendship,
' The trust, security, and mutual tenderness,
' The double joys, where each is glad for both;
' Friendship, the wealth, the last retreat and strength,
' Secure against ill fortune, and the world.'

Hor. I am not apt to take a little offence,
But patient of the failings of my friends,
And willing to forgive; but when an injury
Stabs to the heart, and rouses my resentment,
(Perhaps it is the fault of my rude nature)
I own I cannot easily forgive it.

Alt. Thou hast forgot me.

Hor. No,

Alt. Why are thy eyes
Impatient of me then, scornful, and fierce!

Hor. Because they speak the meaning of my heart?
Because they are honest, and disdain a villain.

Alt. I have wrong'd thee much, *Horatio*.

Hor. True, thou hast.

When I forget it, may I be a wretch,
Vile as thyself, a false perfidious fellow,
' An infamous believing, *British* husband.'

Alt. I've wrong'd the much and heav'n has well
aveng'd it.

I have not, since we parted, been at peace,
Nor known one joy sincere ; ' our broken friendship
' Pursu'd me to the last retreat of love,
' Stood glaring like a ghost, and made me cold with
' horror.

' Misfortunes on misfortunes press upon me,
' Swell o'er my head, like waves, and dash me down ;
' Sorrow, remorse, and shame, have torn my soul ;
' They hang like winter on my youthful hopes,
' And blast the spring and promise of my year.

' *Lav.* So flow'rs are gather'd to adorn a grave
' To lose their freshness amongst bones and rottenness,
' And have their odours stifled in the dust.'

Canst thou hear this, thou cruel hard *Horatio* ?
Canst thou behold thy *Altamont* undone ?
' That gentle, that dear youth ! canst thou behold him,
His poor heart broken, death in his pale visage,
And groaning out his woes, yet stand unmov'd !

Hor. The brave and wise I pity in misfortune,
But when ingratitude and folly suffers,
'Tis weakness to be touch'd.

Alt. I wo't not ask thee
To pity or forgive ; but confess,
This scorn, this insolence of hate is just ;
'Tis constancy of mind, and manly in thee.
But oh ! had I been wrong'd by thee, *Horatio*.
' There is a yielding softness in my heart
Cou'd ne'er have stood it out ; but I had ran,
With streaming eyes, and open arms upon thee,
And prest thee close " to my distracted breast."

Hor. I must hear no more,
Thy weakness is contagious ; I shall catch it,
And be a tame fond wretch.

Lav. Where wou'dst thou go ?
Wou'dst thou part thus ? You sha' not, 'tis impossible ;
For I will bar thy passage, kneeling thus :
Perhaps, thy cruel hand may spurn me off,
But I will throw my body in thy way,

And

And thou shalt trample o'er my faithful bosom,
Tread on me, wound me, kill me ere thou pass.

Alt. Urge not in vain thy pious suit, *Lavinia*,
'I have enough to rid me of my pain.'

Calista, thou hadst reach'd my heart before ;
To make all sure, my friend repeats the blow :
But in the grave our cares shall be forgotten,
'There love and friendship cease. [Falls.

' [*Lavinia runs to him, and endeavours to raise him.*

' *Lav.* Speak to me, *Altamont*.

' He faints ! he dies ! Now turn and see thy triumph !
' My brother ! But our cares shall end together ;
' Here will I lay me down by thy dear side,
' Bemoan thy too hard fate, then share it with thee,
' And never see my cruel lord again.'

[*Horatio runs to Altamont, and raises him in his arms.*

Hor. It is too much to bear ! Look up, my *Altamont* !
My stubborn, unrelenting heart has kill'd him.
Look up and bless me, tell me that thou liv'st.

Oh ! I have urg'd thy gentleness too far ; [*He revives.*

' Do thou and my *Lavinia* both forgive me ;

' A flood of tenderness comes o'er my soul ;'

I cannot speak—I love ! forgive ! and pity thee—

Alt. I thought that nothing cou'd have stay'd my soul,
That long ere this her flight had reach'd the stars ;
But thy known voice has lur'd her back again :
Methinks I fain wou'd set all right with thee,
Make up this most unlucky breach, and then,
With thine and heav'n's forgiveness on my soul,
Shrink to my grave, and be at ease for ever.

Hor. By heav'n, my heart bleeds for thee ; ev'n
this moment

I feel thy pangs of disappointed love.

' Is it not pity that this youth should fall,

' That all his wond'rous goodness should be lost,

' And the world never know it ? Oh my *Altamont* !

' Give me thy sorrows, let me bear'em for thee,

' And shelter thee from ruin.'

Lav. Oh my brother,

Think not but we will share in all thy woes ;

54 THE FAIR PENITENT.

We'll sit all day, and tell sad tales of love :
 And when we light upon some faithless woman,
 Some beauty, like *Calista*, false and fair,
 We'll fix our grief, and our complaining there ;
 We'll curse the nymph that drew the ruin on,
 And mourn the youth that was like thee undone.

[*Exeunt*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A room hung with black ; on one side Lothario's body on a bier ; on the other a table, with a scull and other bones, a book and a lamp on it.

Calista is discovered on a couch in black ; her hair hanging loose and disorder'd : after solemn music, ' and a song,' she rises and comes forward.

' S O N G.

I.

' **H**EAR, you midnight phantoms, hear,
 ' You who pale and wan appear,
 ' And fill the wretch who wakes with fear.
 ' You, who wander, scream and groan
 ' Round the mansions once your own ;
 ' You, who still your crimes upbraid,
 ' You, who rest not with the dead ;
 ' From the coverts where you stray,
 ' Where you lurk and shun the day,
 ' From the charnel and the tomb,
 ' Hither haste ye, hither come.

}
}

II.

' Obide *Calista* for delay,
 ' Tell her 'tis for her you stay ;
 ' Bid her die, and come away.
 ' See the sexton with his spade,
 ' See the grave already made ;
 ' Listen, fair one, to thy knell,
 ' This musick is thy passing bell.'

}
}

Cal.

THE FAIR PENITENT. 55

Cal. 'Tis well! these solemn sounds, this pomp of horror,

Are fit to feed the frenzy in my soul;
Here's room for meditation ev'n to madness,
'Till the mind burst with thinking. This dull flame
Sleeps in the socket. Sure the book was left
To tell me something;—for instruction then—
He teaches holy sorrow and contrition,
And penitence.—Is it become an art then?
A trick that lazy, dull, luxurious gownmen
Can teach us to do over? I'll no more on't;

[*Throwing away the book.*]

I have more real anguish in my heart,
Than all their pedant discipline e'er knew.
What charnel has been rifled for these bones?
Fye! this is pageantry;—they look uncouthly.
But what of that? if he or she that own'd 'em
Safe from disquiet sit, and smile to see
The farce their miserable relicts play.
But here's a sight is terrible indeed!
Is this that haughty, gallant, gay *Lothario*,
That dear perfidious—Ah!—how pale he looks!
How grim with clotted blood, and those dead eyes!
Ascend, ye ghosts, fantastick forms of night,
In all your diff'rent dreadful shapes ascend,
And match the present horror, if you can.

Enter Sciolto.

Sci. This dead of night, this silent hour of darkness,
Nature for rest ordain'd, and soft repose;
And yet distraction, and tumultuous jars,
Keep all our frightened citizens awake:

' The senate, weak, divided, and irresolute,
' Want pow'r to succour the afflicted state.
' Vainly in words and long debates they're wise,
' While the fierce factions scorn their peaceful orders,
' And drown the voice of law in noise and anarchy.'
Amidst the general wreck, see where she stands,

[*Pointing to Calista.*]

Like *Helen* in the night when *Troy* was sack'd,
Spectatress of the mischief which she made.

Cal.

56 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Cal. It is *Sciolto!* be thyself, my soul;
Be strong to bear his fatal indignation,
That he may see thou art not lost so far,
But somewhat still of his great spirit lives
In the forlorn *Calista*.

Sci. Thou wert once
My daughter.

Cal. Happy were it I had dy'd,
And never lost that name.

Sci. That's something yet;
Thou wert the very darling of my age:
I thought the day too short to gaze upon thee,
That all the blessings I could gather for thee,
By cares on earth, and by my pray'rs to heav'n,
Were little for my fondness to bestow;
Why didst thou turn to folly then, and curse me?

Cal. Because my soul was rudely drawn from yours;
A poor imperfect copy of my father,
' Where goodness, and the strength of manly virtue,
' Was thinly planted, and the idle void
' Fill'd up with light belief, and easy fondness;'
It was, because I lov'd, and was a woman.

Sci. Hadst thou been honest, thou hadst been a
cherubim;
But of that joy, as of a gem long lost,
Beyond redemption gone, think we no more.
Hast thou e'er dar'd to meditate on death?

Cal. I have, as on the end of shame and sorrow.

Sci. Ha! answer me! say, hast thou coolly thought?
'Tis not the Stoic's lessons got by rote,
The pomp of words, and pedant dissertations,
That can sustain thee in that hour of terror;
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
But when the trial comes, they start, and stand aghast;
Hast thou consider'd what may happen after it?
How thy account may stand, and what to answer?

Cal. I've turn'd my eyes inward upon myself,
Where foul offence and shame have laid all waste;
Therefore my soul abhors the wretched dwelling,
And longs to find some better place of rest.

Sci.

Sci. 'Tis justly thought, and worthy of that spirit
That dwelt in ancient *Latian* breasts, when *Rome*
Was mistress of the world. I wou'd go on,
And tell thee all my purpose; but it sticks
Here at my heart, and cannot find a way.

Cal. Then spare the telling, if it be a pain,
And write the meaning with your poniard here.

Sci. Oh! truly guess'd—feest thou this trembling
hand—— [Holding up a dagger.
Thrice justice urg'd,——and thrice the slack'ning
finews

Forgot their office, and confest the father!
At length the stubborn virtue has prevaild,
It must, it must be so——Oh! take it then,
[Giving the dagger.

And know the rest untaught.

Cal. I understand you.

It is but thus, and both are satisfy'd.

[She offers to kill herself: Sciolto catches hold of her arm.

Sci. A moment, give me yet a moment's space.
The stern, the rigid judge has been obey'd;
Now nature, and the father, claim their turns.
I've held the balance with an iron hand,
And put off ev'ry tender human thought,
To doom my child to death; but spare my eyes
The most unnatural sight, lest their strings crack,
My old brain split, and I grow mad with horror.

Cal. Ha! is it possible; and is there yet
Some little dear remain of love and tenderness
For poor, undone *Calista* in your heart?

Sci. O! when I think what pleasure I took in thee,
What joys thou gav'st me in thy prattling infancy,
Thy sprightly wit, and early blooming beauty;
How I have stood, and fed my eyes upon thee,
Then lifted up my hands, and wond'ring blest thee;
By my strong grief, my heart ev'n melts within me;
I could curse nature, and that tyrant, honour,
For making me thy father, and thy judge;
Thou art my daughter still.

Cal.

Cal. For that kind word,
 Thus let me fall, thus humbly to the earth,
 Weep on your feet, and bless you for this goodness;
 Oh! 'tis too much for this offending wretch,
 This parricide, that murders with her crimes,
 Shortens her father's age, and cuts him off,
 Ere little more than half his years be number'd.

Sci. Would it were otherwise—but thou must die.—

Cal. That I must die, it is my only comfort;
 Death is the privilege of human nature,
 And life without it were not worth our taking:
 'Thither the poor, the pris'ner, and the mourner,
 'Fly for relief, and lay their burdens down.'
 Come then, and take me to thy cold, cold arms,
 Thou meagre shade; here let me breathe my last,
 Charm'd with my father's pity and forgiveness,
 More than if angels tun'd their golden viols,
 And sung a *requiem* to my parting soul.

Sci. I'm summon'd hence, ere this my friends
 expect me.

There is I know not what of sad presage,
 That tells me, I shall never see thee more;
 If it be so this our last farewell,
 And these the parting pangs, which nature feels,
 When anguish rends the heart strings—Oh! my
 Daughter! [Exit Scioto.]

Cal. Now think, thou curst *Calista*, now behold
 The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin,
 Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around,
 That loudly cry for vengeance on thy head;
 Yet Heav'n, who knows our weak imperfect natures,
 How blind with passions, and how prone to evil,
 Makes not too strict inquiry for offences,
 But is aton'd by penitence and pray'r:
 Cheap recompence! here 'twould not be receiv'd,
 Nothing but blood can make the expiation,
 And cleanse the soul from inbred, deep pollution.
 And see another injur'd wretch is come,
 To call for justice from my tardy hand.

Enter

THE FAIR PENITENT. 59

Enter Altamont.

Alt. Hail to you, horrors ! hail thou house of death !
And thou the lovely mistress of the shades,
Whose beauty gilds the more than midnight darkness,
And makes it grateful as the dawn of day,
O ! take me in a fellow-mourner with thee,
I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear ;
And when the fountains of thy eyes are dry,
Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

Cal. I know thee well, thou art the injur'd *Altamont* ;
Thou com'st to urge me with the wrongs I've done thee ;
But know, I stand upon the brink of life,
And in a moment mean to set me free
From shame and thy upbraiding.

Alt. Falsly, falsly
Dost thou accuse me ; when did I complain,
Or murmur at my fate ? ' For thee I have
' Forgot the temper of *Italian* husbands,
' And fondness has prevail'd upon revenge ;
' I bore my load of infamy with patience,
' As holy men do punishment from Heav'n,
' Nor thought it hard, because it came from thee ;'
Oh ! then forbid me not to mourn thy loss,
To wish some better fate had rul'd our loves,
And that *Calista* had been mine and true.

Cal. Oh *Altamont* ! 'tis hard for souls like mine,
Haughty and fierce, to yield they have done amiss ;
But oh ! behold my proud, disdainful heart
Bends to thy gentler virtue : Yes, I own,
Such is thy truth, thy tenderness, and love,
Such are the graces that adorn thy youth,
That were I not abandon'd to destruction,
With thee I might have liv'd for ages blest,
And dy'd in peace within thy faithful arms.

Alt. Then happiness is still within our reach :
Here let remembrance lose our past misfortunes,
Tear all records that hold the fatal story ;
Here let our joys begin, from hence go on
In long successive order.

Cal. What ! in death ?

Alt.

60 THE FAIR PENITENT.

Alt. Then art thou fix'd to die?—But be it so,
We'll go together; my advent'rous love
Shall follow thee to those uncertain beings;
' Whether our lifeless shades are doom'd to wander
' In gloomy groves, with discontented ghosts;
' Or whether thro' the upper air we fleet,
' And tread the fields of light; still I'll pursue thee,'
'Till fate ordains that we shall part no more.

Cal. Oh no! Heav'n has some better lot in store
To crown thee with; live, and be happy long;
Live for some maid that shall deserve thy goodness.
Some kind unpractis'd heart, that never yet
Has listen'd to the false ones of thy sex,
Nor known the arts of ours; she shall reward thee,
Meet thee with virtues equal to thy own,
Charm thee with sweetness, beauty, and with truth;
Be blest in thee alone, and thou in her.

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Now mourn indeed, ye miserable pair,
For now the measure of your woes is full.

Alt. What dost thou mean, *Horatio*?

Hor. Oh! 'tis dreadful:

The great, the good *Sciolto* dies this moment.

Cal. My father!

Alt. That's a deadly stroke indeed.

Hor. Not long ago, he privately went forth
Attended but by few, and those unbidden;
I hear'd which way he took, and straight pursu'd him,
But found him compass'd by *Lothario's* faction,
Almost alone amidst a crowd of foes;
Too late we brought him aid, and drove them back;
Ere that his frantic valour had provok'd
The death he seem'd to wish for from their swords.

Cal. And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient earth?
Dost thou not labour with thy mur'drous weight?
And you, ye glitt'ring heavenly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you,
For I am all contagion, death, and ruin,
And nature sickens at me; rest, thou world,
This parricide shall be thy plague no more;

Thus,

S

THE FAIR PENITENT. 61

Thus, thus, I set thee free. [Stabs herself.

Hor. Oh fatal rashness!

Alt. Thou dost instruct me well; to lengthen life
Is but to trifle now.

Altamont offers to kill himself; Horatio prevents
him, and wrests his sword from him.

Hor. Ha! what means

The frantick Altamont? Some foe to man
Has breath'd on ev'ry breast contagious fury,
And epidemick madness.

Enter Sciolto, pale and bloody, supported by servants.

Cal. Oh, my heart!

Well may'st thou fail, for see the spring that fed
Thy vital stream is wasted, and runs low.
My father! will you now at last forgive me,
If, after all my crimes, and all your sufferings,
I call you once again by that dear name,
Will you forget my shame, and those wide wounds?
Lift up your hand, and bless me ere I go
Down to my dark abode?

Sci. Alas! my daughter!

Thou hast rashly ventur'd in a stormy sea,
Where life, fame, virtue, all were wreck'd and lost;
But sure thou hast borne thy part in all the anguish,
And smarted with the pain; then rest in peace:
Let silence and oblivion hide thy name,
And save thee from the malice of posterity;
And may'st thou find with heav'n the same forgiveness
As with thy father here.——Die, and be happy.

Cal. Celestial sounds! Peace dawns upon my soul,
And ev'ry pain grows less——Oh! gentle Altamont,
Think not too hardly of me when I'm gone.
But pity me——Had I but early known
Thy wond'rous worth, thou excellent young man,
We had been happier both:——Now 'tis too late,
And yet my eyes take pleasure to behold thee;
Thou art their last dear object.——Mercy, heav'n!

[She dies.

Alt. Cold! dead and cold! and yet thou art not
chang'd,

D

But

62 THE FAIR PENITENT.

' But lovely still! Hadst thou a thousand faults,
' What heart so hard, what virtue so severe,
' But at that beauty, must of force relented,
' Melted to pity, love, and to forgiveness?'

Sci. Oh! turn thee from that fatal object, *Altamont*,
Come near, and let me bless thee ere I die.

To thee and brave *Horatio* I bequeath
My fortunes——Lay me by thy noble father,
And love my memory as thou hast done his,
For thou hast been my son.—Oh! gracious heav'n!

Thou that hast endless blessings still in store
For virtue, and for filial piety,

Let grief, disgrace, and want be far away,
But multiply thy mercies on his head;

Let honour, greatness, goodness still be with him,

And peace in all his ways—— [He dies.

Alt. Take, take it all;

To thee, *Horatio*, I resign the gift,
While I pursue my father and my love,
And find my only portion in the grave.

Hor. The storm of grief bears hard upon his youth,
And bends him like a drooping flower to earth.

' Raise him and bear him in' [*Altamont is carried off.*]

By such examples are we taught to prove

The sorrows that attend unlawful love;

Death, or some worse misfortune, soon divide

The injur'd bridegroom from his guilty bride:

If you would have the nuptial union last,

Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

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EPILOGUE.

